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THE CAREER OF A KANSAS POLITICIAN

THE particular politician, with whom we are concerned, reached Lawrence, Kansas, on the twenty-second of April, 1855, alone and unannounced. He came in a primitive, rickety buggy, drawn by an old, moccasin-colored horse, which, it is to be hoped, had seen better days. The appearance of the new-comer himself was in keeping with his travelling outfit—a man quite forty years old, lank, almost haggard in figure, and dressed in overalls and a round-about. A passer-by who happened to notice him in a casual way as he alighted at the office of *The Free State* newspaper to enquire about Tecumseh, a hamlet twenty miles further west whither he intended to proceed, would have taken him for an itinerant day-laborer. That may have been the first impression in the newspaper office, but it did not last long. The easy, assured manner of the stranger, his quick penetrating glance, the fluency and originality of his talk, soon dissipated any unfavorable conclusions which his country jeans and generally disreputable appearance may have suggested. "Who are you anyway?" somebody finally asked with more bluntness than grace. "My name is Lane," was the reply, "and I hail from Indiana." One of the group happened to be a Hoosier himself and was familiar in a general way with the history of the visitor. So far from being an itinerant day-laborer, he had been a man of considerable political and military prominence—stump-orator, presidential elector, lieutenant-governor, member of the lower house of Congress and colonel of two regiments of volunteers that won distinction in the Mexican war. "My route to the territory," he said in explanation of the peculiarities of his dress, "lay through Missouri. I should have fared badly if I had been recognized. So I adopted this disguise of overalls and a round-about."

But if Lane were to settle in Kansas, why should he go to Tecumseh? That town was still in the experimental stage and might come to nothing. Lawrence, on the contrary, had an assured future. No place in the territory offered greater advantages. To go further would be to fare worse. The suggestion struck Lane favorably. After looking about the village and talking with some of the principal people he concluded to stay in Lawrence, and on the following day published a card announcing the fact.

How did it happen that Lane should betake himself to Kansas in the spring of 1855? The territory had been an unfriendly element in his career. It was his vote for the Kansas-Nebraska bill, while a member of the House of Representatives from Indiana, that ruined his political fortunes in that state. But among all the Northern politicians to whom the support of this measure brought disaster, Lane was the only one who sought to retrieve it by migrating to the debatable ground. Soon after his arrival there, the report got abroad that he had come at the instance of Senator Douglas and the administration to attempt the formation of a new, Anti-Southern Democratic party on the platform of 1852. A Kansas congressman, addressing the House of Representatives in 1866, made the definite statement that Lane, in migrating to the territory, followed "the suggestions of Mr. Douglas and other party leaders." In 1885 a little book, called *The Grim Chieftain of Kansas, by One Who Knows*, appeared which set forth with considerable detail the particulars of his alleged mission. President Pierce and Mr. Douglas, according to the confident author of this volume, foresaw that the South would be worsted in the fight for Kansas. Believing, however, that the territory might become a non-slave-holding Democratic state if matters were wisely managed, they concluded to attempt the task of converting it into a commonwealth of this sort, and solicited James Henry Lane, of Indiana, to act as their representative in the project. After some hesitation he consented to undertake the commission, stipulating by way of consideration that he should control federal patronage in the territory and have the support of the administration in any political ambitions which he might entertain.

Whatever the facts may be, two collateral points are clear: first, Lane, in his later years, when all occasion for deception, if any ever existed, had passed away, stoutly maintained that he came to Kansas as the representative of Mr. Douglas; secondly, he actually attempted to organize a new party in the name of the Illinois senator. The convention, called for this purpose, met in Lawrence on the twenty-seventh day of June. It turned out to be a small affair. Though scarcely half a score of delegates appeared they passed resolutions out of all proportion to their meagre numbers—resolutions in which the necessity for a reformed Democratic party was vigorously asserted.

Five days after the convention, and before the fate of the movement, which it was expected to begin, had become entirely evident, we find Lane at Pawnee, the temporary capital of the territory. His mission there was chiefly domestic. For some whimsical

reason he wished to obtain a divorce from his wife, whom he left behind in Indiana. During the territorial period all matters of this sort were adjudicated by the legislature.¹ Lane seems to have expected that his petition would be granted as a matter of course, but he was disappointed. The statesmen at Pawnee could do some extraordinary things. To make even a verbal denial of the right to hold slaves a felony punishable with imprisonment at hard labor for not less than two years was a trifle, but they could not bring themselves to release Lane from his marriage vows. They might have felt differently if he had been the *defendant* in the case—but the present reviewer does not purpose to enter upon a discussion of his domestic affairs.

Members of the legislature used to say that the rebuff which Lane experienced at Pawnee was the turning-point in his Kansas career, but the affair scarcely deserves any such prominence. It must be considered merely as an incident—unexpected, significant, possibly prophetic of evil—not as a capital event. Lane soon became convinced that all his schemes for a new party would end in smoke. Federal office-holders, secure as they supposed in their strong possession of the field, ridiculed the movement. A powerful speech, delivered by Dr. Robinson on the fourth of July, urging all anti-slavery men to stand together until Kansas should be admitted into the Union, was another discouraging event. Besides, the administration remained silent—the most untoward circumstance of all.

It soon became an urgent question with Lane—what next? Apparently he must either abandon the territory or make terms with the anti-slavery people. The return to Indiana would involve humiliations which he was not willing to face. The other horn of the dilemma, though by no means comfortable, seemed more inviting. A life-long Democrat, he had little sympathy with the theories and policies of the “Free State” party. On the contrary, he was in the habit of denouncing the radical section of it as “the offscouring and scum of Northern society.” Moreover he had been saying rather freely since his arrival that in the matter of property rights “he knew no difference between a negro and a mule.”

About six weeks after his fruitless attempt to establish a party of his own Lane joined the anti-slavery organization. He did not receive a cordial welcome. One man who knew something of his history made a vigorous protest. The speech evidently called for

¹Some rather awkward complications attended this practice. On one occasion, at least, the presiding officer of the legislative court was co-respondent. “I’ve got to do the d—dest mean thing a man ever did,” he said to a friend just before the court opened. “I’ve got to preside at the trial of Susie —.” He took an extra glass of whiskey and proceeded to the discharge of his judicial duties!

a reply, but instead of an angry retort an interval of silence followed, until finally the chairman, thinking that something ought to be done, shouted, "Where is the redoubtable colonel?" Lane then came forward, and, without noticing the personal attack, proceeded to speak in a very conservative strain. "It requires wisdom," he said, "it requires manhood to restrain passion. . . . Moderation, moderation, moderation, gentlemen!"

The general policy of the anti-slavery party had been determined before Lane cut loose from Mr. Douglas and the administration. It involved the repudiation of the "bogus" territorial legislature and its laws, the organization of a state government without the usual congressional enabling act, and application for immediate admission into the Union.

If Lane was an unimportant factor in settling the plan of the campaign, he had to be reckoned with in the execution of it. By a clever ruse he succeeded in securing his own election and that of a conservative delegation from the radical town of Lawrence—the town which Dr. Robinson and the Massachusetts Emigrant Aid Company founded—to the large and important convention at Big Springs on the fifth of September, 1855. It was the first general convention of the "Free State" party. Delegates from every part of the territory, even from pro-slavery towns like Kickapoo and Le-compton, were present—all armed to the teeth. "I remember well, at the rude country hotel," said one of these delegates, "when I asked the landlady for my overcoat, her response—'Go in and get it. I would not touch that armory for all the property in the room.'"¹

Perhaps the most surprising thing about this convention was that Lane, admitted to membership in the party barely three weeks before and admitted under protest, should have been selected to write the platform. And he prepared one which ought to have satisfied the most ultra "Hunker" in the territory or out of it. This curious pronunciamiento applauded the Dred Scott decision and the Fugitive Slave law, advocated the exclusion of negroes from Kansas, and repudiated, quite superfluously one would think, all sympathy with "abolitionism."

When the constitutional convention, the sequel of numerous preceding conventions, met at Topeka on the twenty-third of October, Lane was elected president of it. As he had been lieutenant-governor of Indiana for one term and consequently president of the state senate, he was not without experience in parliamentary affairs. The convention certainly needed a chairman who appreciated the anoma-

¹ Speer's *Life of Gen. Jas. H. Lane*, "*The Saviour of Kansas*," Garden City, Kansas, 1896. This book was written, put in type and printed by the author.

lous conditions under which it convened and the serious perils to which it was exposed, who brought to the conduct of its deliberations not only experience, but the grasp and poise of statesmanship. It embarked upon a movement which had no precedent in the history of the country and was to that extent revolutionary. Other commonwealths may have formed their constitutions without the consent of Congress, but they proceeded in subordination to the territorial authorities. The Topeka convention, so far from acting in harmony with these authorities, made no secret of its purpose to overthrow them. An assembly, meeting under such circumstances, confronted by problems grave and perplexing, conscious that the boundary between the revolutionary and the treasonable is often indistinct, must do its work in an atmosphere of excitement and tension. Upon many of the delegates the criticalness of the situation had a solemnizing effect. It intensified their sense of responsibility, lifted them above all petty and personal considerations to the sanity and disinterestedness which became the representatives of a great cause.

What did the president of the convention contribute to the deliberations of these serious days? A brief inaugural speech, occasional remarks more or less pertinent during the debates, the "black law" scheme by which negroes were to be forbidden the new state, incessant factional intrigue and—the preliminaries of a duel. One of the delegates happened to repeat certain damaging stories, which were current, in regard to Lane's private morals. The truth of the stories nobody denied, but as they were proving harmful to his political aspirations, something must be done to counteract their effect. His election as president of the convention had been a useful testimonial of confidence. What would be more likely to emphasize and re-enforce this testimonial than a challenge, especially if it should be declined? Contrary to all expectations the troublesome delegate sent a prompt acceptance. As Lane neither wished nor intended to fight, the situation was awkward and his friends had difficulty in extricating him from it. Indeed they found no easier way of escape than to withdraw the challenge and to make satisfactory apologies. The episode, sprung upon the convention for purposes wholly personal and dramatic, rudely crossed the current of its deliberations.

Apparently Lane soon forgot his personal griefs. At all events he issued a proclamation appointing the twenty-fifth of December a day of territorial thanksgiving and praise shortly after the convention adjourned. The people had suffered much, he said, from those whom they would be glad "to recognize as brothers," yet it

now seemed possible for them to secure the blessings of liberty and good government "without embruing their hands in blood."

The felicitation was premature. Lane's thanksgiving proclamation bore the date of November 27. On that very day, such was the irony of fate, the governor of the territory issued a war proclamation, ordering the military authorities, after collecting as large a force of volunteers as possible, to report for service to the sheriff of Douglas County. This doughty official had arrested an anti-slavery man in the vicinity of Lawrence on some trumped-up charge. A few friends planned and executed a successful rescue. It suited the mood of the sheriff to hold that town responsible for the affair. He thought that no better opportunity would probably offer for "wiping out the d——d abolition hole"—an enterprise dear to his heart—and he soon appeared, accompanied by ten or twelve hundred armed Missourians, to make the most of it.

Lane was the only man in the threatened town with a military record. At the battle of Buena Vista he commanded the Third Regiment of Indiana Volunteers, and, according to the official report of the brigadier-general, he and his men on that occasion "did infinite honor to the state and nation which gave them birth." After the expiration of the term of service, for which this regiment enlisted, Lane raised another, the Fifth Indiana, followed General Scott to the city of Mexico, and had the honor among other things of capturing Santa Anna's wooden leg. His military reputation grew fast up and down the border. In a surprisingly short time the opinion had become current that he must be "a powerful fighter." But in spite of his military experience and reputation the citizens of Lawrence declined to entrust him with the direction of affairs in this grave crisis, and elected a civilian, Dr. Charles Robinson, commander-in-chief. Evidently something had happened in the past six months which disturbed their confidence in the veteran of the Mexican War. The civilian, suddenly raised by vote of the town to the rank of major-general, adopted tactics of the Fabian type. He set Lane to drilling the little garrison, which comprised all the male inhabitants of Lawrence who could bear arms and volunteers from neighboring towns, and to digging rifle-pits. If attacked he would fight, not otherwise. Why should a thousand armed Missourians lay siege to Lawrence because certain persons, for whom it disavowed all responsibility, had assaulted a local sheriff? The invaders themselves soon came to be troubled by this question. If somebody should happen to attack them it would be a god-send. But the obstinate town persisted in its defensive tactics and the gallant invaders, who marched up the hill, concluded to march down again.

This famous "Wakarusa War," in which there was not a gun fired, would have had a different conclusion if our "powerful fighter" had been in command. He thrust a challenge into the proceedings of the Topeka constitutional convention for the purpose of making a sensation and of exploiting himself. In the siege of Lawrence there was another and a more serious illustration of Lane's eccentricities, to use no harsher word. At the crisis of affairs, when the tension was acutest, he made secret preparations for a night attack upon the Missourians. If this sortie had taken place it would probably have changed the whole character of Kansas history. Some one—it was the member of the constitutional convention who embarrassed Lane by accepting his challenge—reported the affair at headquarters and it was promptly suppressed.

In the festivities which followed upon the conclusion of peace—the "War" lasted scarcely two weeks—Lane appears to have forgotten his frustrated sortie. "With a desperate and wily foe already in your midst," he said in a speech of congratulation to the disbanding volunteers, "you restrained your fire determined . . . to compel them to take all the responsibility of a battle which you believed would shake the Union to its very basis."

The sheriff of Douglas County created no little disturbance, but it was quickly over and the movement toward a state government went forward as if nothing had happened. In due time the necessary machinery was provided, ready to be put in motion when it pleased Congress. Lane went to Washington in the spring of 1856 with a memorial of the "General Assembly of the State of Kansas," praying for immediate admission to the Union under the Topeka constitution. The appearance of this document in the Senate raised a storm. It was described as "a petition coming from a self-constituted, arrogant and usurping body." "I do not know," said Senator Butler of South Carolina, "that I ever felt on any occasion more sensibly an insult offered to the Senate of the United States." Unfortunately the document itself afforded ground for suspicions, since it abounded in erasures and interlineations, and the signatures were all in one hand-writing. "I do not believe," said Senator Rusk of Texas, "that this paper ever saw Kansas." Then "who is Mr. Lane, the bearer of the memorial?" it was asked. Senator Mason of Virginia called attention to the fact that no one rose to answer the inquiry and to say that Mr. Lane "is what he claims to be, an honorable man."

The memorial was withdrawn. Most men would have said that it had been damaged beyond all possibility of repair, but the bearer of it thought differently. A few days later Senator Harlan of Iowa

presented an affidavit, sworn to by Lane before a justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, to the effect that the annexed "twenty-four half-sheets of paper" contained the original draft of the Kansas memorial and that he was authorized to revise it. He also explained that the members of the legislature "executed three sets of signatures," which were to be attached to revised copies of the memorial, but they had been mislaid and he ordered them to be subscribed from autographs in his possession.

Senator Harlan, in presenting the affidavit, took occasion to say that he felt humiliated because he could not rise in his seat, when the memorial was first before the Senate, and answer the sneering question, "Who is James H. Lane?" He had been looking into the history of the country, meanwhile, and proceeded to give a pretty full sketch of the apparently forgotten politician who stumped Indiana for every Democratic presidential candidate from Martin Van Buren in 1840 to Franklin Pierce in 1852. But neither original documents nor biographical sketches proved of any service. The unfortunate memorial got no better treatment on its second appearance than it received at first. Mr. Douglas surpassed even the senators from South Carolina and Texas in the violence of his denunciations. "I submit," he said, "whether here is not evidence of the most glaring fraud ever attempted to be perpetrated upon a legislative body." The bearer of the memorial replied to these charges—by a challenge. Mr. Douglas declined it.

The campaign in Washington was disastrous. It could not have succeeded in any event, but poor generalship converted what might have been an orderly retreat into a rout.

Lane's career abounds in contrasts. His pretentious affidavit, his useless "twenty-four half-sheets of paper," his ineffectual appeal to the code were succeeded by a period of extraordinary oratorical triumphs. After the failure of the memorial he visited many of the principal Northern cities to speak in behalf of Kansas. His singular ability "to talk men over" had already attracted attention in the territory, but it did not obtain any general recognition until the presidential campaign of 1856.

Lane was almost wholly a product of the border. The inspiration and the opportunity of his surroundings contented him. In this respect he was quite unlike his contemporary, and in later years, as we shall see, his great friend and patron, Abraham Lincoln, who also came up out of the wilderness. A noble discontent with the world about him drove the latter to the refuge of books. He read them in the early light of the morning and by the last embers on the hearth at night. They stimulated his thirst for knowledge, en-

larged and chastened his vocabulary, broadened and deepened his intellectual vision. Lane, on the contrary, missed everything that books can give a man. He did not care for them—had none of the finer mental aptitudes, none of the mysterious spiritual qualities which crave their ministry. His education, such as it was, came from the public street and corner grocery, from the bar-rooms of country taverns and the political convention. This education served his uses well, as his one particular talent lay in the line of public speech, and it gave him abundant opportunities for practice. He became a past master in the picturesque, bizarre dialect of the frontier and was able "to mount his stump . . . or other ready elevation," and pour forth eulogy, invective, ridicule or declamation as "any occurrent set of circumstances" might demand.

Lane's manner was always impassioned and sometimes frantic. No book of oratory can be found which would sanction his gesticulation. At the outset he might be calm enough, but the period of restraint, especially if he were dealing with a hostile audience, or with one stirred by some great passion, did not last long. Signs of passion soon began to appear, which deepened and intensified until finally coat, vest and necktie were pulled off, while his voice vibrated between shouts and blood-curdling whispers. "If his body had been made of combustible matter it would have burnt out," John Quincy Adams wrote after listening to a speech by Stephen A. Douglas. Lane's gesticulation was even more violent and fiery.

This "mouthpiece of chaos" may not have been an artist, but what of that? The final test of public speech is its immediate effectiveness. It addresses the ear, not the eye. The first, the essential life of it belongs to the hour and the audience. Whether it shall have a second life as literature, whether it will bear reproduction in type, is another matter. Very often that which thrilled the listener, bores the reader. Lane met this crucial test triumphantly. He created a great sensation wherever he went. Senator Doolittle of Wisconsin said that, though his experience in political campaigns had not been small, he never saw audiences so profoundly moved.

It was at Chicago that Lane won his greatest triumph. Ten thousand men gathered to hear him. He had a congenial theme—border ruffians, invasions, murders, a heroic constituency battling for the rights of man—and his weird, dramatic, startling oratory showed at its best. The vast multitude was roused to an enthusiasm which took the shape of volunteers and contributions as well as of tremendous applause. Newspapers of the next morning declared the meeting to be the most remarkable ever held in the state.

"We believe," said one of them, "that it will inaugurate a new era in Illinois."

Affairs were going badly at the front in the meantime—Lawrence pillaged by the persistent sheriff of Douglas county; the Topeka legislature dispersed; writs issued for the arrest of anti-slavery leaders on charges of treason, and Missouri preparing for an invasion which should settle the tedious and irritating controversy. Late in the summer Lane, his tour of speaking finished, ventured back into the territory incognito, as he happened to be included among those who had been indicted for treason and feared arrest. But his presence did not help the situation, which went steadily from bad to worse until the arrival in the early autumn of 1856 of a new governor, John W. Geary, who succeeded in bringing a temporary order out of the confusion. He sent the invading bands of armed Missourians about their business. Lane and "other meddling agitators," much to the relief of the inhabitants of Lawrence, as we are informed by an entry in the Executive Minutes, took refuge in Nebraska.

But Lane, even in exile, found little rest for the sole of his foot. He was scarcely out of the territory when he received a challenge from "two aged men . . . to name two or ten of his followers" who should arm themselves "with muskets, rifles, shot-guns or revolvers" and meet an equal number of pro-slavery men at short range on the field of honor. Evidently the bloody instructions, which Lane was accustomed to teach, returned to plague him. He did not like the terms which these "two aged men" offered and made a counter-proposition to the effect that he and Senator Atchison supported by one hundred picked men on a side should arbitrate the fate of Kansas by wager of battle in the presence of twelve United States senators and twelve members of the House of Representatives. This counter-proposition reproduced quite literally the terms of that famous old-time fight between Palamon and Arcite, though the author of it probably had never heard of those war-like youths. Neither Senator Atchison nor the "two aged men," nor anybody else saw fit to accept the revised challenge. This particular disturbance soon blew over, but it was succeeded by others, especially at Nebraska City, where a local newspaper, then published by Ex-Secretary J. Sterling Morton, made a sharp attack upon Lane. Some of his men proposed by way of retaliation to mob the office, and it was with considerable difficulty that they were prevented from carrying out their purpose. The affair caused so much excitement and bad feeling that Lane called a public "conciliatory meeting," which opened in a very boisterous and unpromising fashion.

A great many armed Missourians had taken the trouble to be present, not, however, in the interest of peace and good-will. Lane's oratory was equal to the emergency. He began by congratulating himself on the fact that so large a portion of Missouri had responded to his call for a conference. Intimate friends of his and comrades in arms had been citizens of that state. He fought in the Mexican War side by side with the gallant Colonel Doniphan, known and honored by every man before him. If he were here to-night what feasting would there be in harmony and love. Like the gentlemen from across the river he was a Democrat. With their domestic institutions he had no wish to interfere. They might keep these institutions if they were so disposed. He himself once believed in slavery. Let the gentlemen listen to the story of his awakening. It happened years ago that he went to the house of a sugar planter with a young carpenter, who wished to obtain work. After learning the object of their visit, the planter "laid himself back with his thumbs in the armholes of his vest and replied, 'I bought two carpenters yesterday.' Great God! If such men are buying carpenters, machinists, engineers, how soon will they sell you and me in their marts of human merchandise!"

When Lane concluded his speech the Missourians, who had intended to use their knives and revolvers before the meeting was over, applauded him no less enthusiastically than his own men.

The riddance, for which the citizens of Lawrence were so thankful, lasted six months. At the end of that period Lane returned to the territory. The administration of Governor Geary had just closed and that of Robert J. Walker and Frederic P. Stanton was beginning. With their advent the contest shifted somewhat. Armed invasions from Missouri were at an end, and it remained to be seen what the slave-power could accomplish by other agencies. Would it be possible to keep possession of the territorial legislature? The time for a new election approached. It was a question, much debated among the anti-slavery men, whether they should take part in it. Two conventions were called for the purpose of discussing the subject. In the first Lane opposed the policy of making a contest, in the second he favored it and found himself on the winning side. The anti-slavery party carried the election and got possession of the legislature, whose statutes and enactments they had so stubbornly repudiated.

Though the loss of this election seemed to be a crushing defeat, the pro-slavery leaders were not disposed to abandon the field. One desperate chance of retrieving their fortunes remained and they did not hesitate to embrace it. Possibly something could be done

through the agency of a constitutional convention. Such a movement had been under way some months, and culminated in what is known as the Lecompton Constitution. The pro-slavery managers declined to submit this instrument as a whole to the people, knowing very well that such a course would be fatal to it. Upon certain questions, relatively unimportant, they would allow a vote. But the constitution the people should have whether they wanted it or not, and the slaves still remaining in the territory—some four hundred in number—and their natural increase, must not be meddled with. President Buchanan sent this constitution to the Senate, accompanied by an urgent recommendation that Kansas be admitted to the Union under it, a recommendation which that body adopted.

The policy of the administration created intense excitement in Washington and elsewhere. "I have no advice to give the people of the territory of Kansas," said Senator Hamlin of Maine, "but I can say this: . . . if Congress shall, in its power, undertake to force a constitution and a state government upon that people, . . . they are only fit to be slaves, and they will be only slaves, if they do not resist it to the last extremity."

The people of Kansas scarcely needed exhortation to resist the Lecompton Constitution. Never before had they been in so dangerous a mood. Lane was in his element. It is a wonder that his incendiary stump oratory did not precipitate an actual outbreak of "Chaos and Gehenna." He went everywhere, preaching the doctrine of violence with a volcanic energy. A speech delivered at Leavenworth, November 14, 1857, furnishes an example of his style and method. "These villains," he said, referring to the members of the Lecompton Constitutional Convention, "these villains have forfeited their lives to an injured people. . . . Commence at John Calhoun, the president, and go down to Batt Jones, the hero of Oxford, and a blacker set of villains cannot be found. Truth—they know not what it means. Honesty—they don't know that it has an existence. I say that John Calhoun should have written upon his tomb-stone (if he ever die) 'Felon, Felon, Felon.' . . . I am not going to advise war or bloodshed to-night, for perhaps there is no need of that. We have got the goats so separated from the sheep that we can easily kill them without committing crime. For I truly believe that should God show his special providence here to-night, we should see in these starry heavens his hand, commanding us to kill those damned villains. . . . I say hang them, hang them to-night!"

Neither John Calhoun nor Batt Jones was hung. Other and

milder measures served every purpose. Acting-Governor Stanton called an extra session of the recently elected legislature, which promptly passed an act submitting the Lecompton Constitution to the people and they rejected it by an overwhelming majority.

The slave power now gave up the struggle for Kansas. Yet the apprehensions and alarms of Lane did not subside at once. On the contrary, when General Denver became acting governor, December 21, 1857, they received a fresh and violent lease of life. Soon after his appointment the new magistrate took occasion to denounce "those lawless and restless men who are never satisfied except when engaged in some broil." A little later Denver, not content with generalities, proceeded to post "one J. H. Lane" as a demagogue. The latter had been appointed major-general of volunteers by the legislature and had undertaken to compose certain troubles in Southern Kansas, but his presence in that section created more disturbance than it quelled. Lane replied in a furious card: "I do arraign one J. W. Denver before the country and denounce him as a calumniator, perjurer and tyrant. . . . For base political purposes he has sought an excuse for a difficulty with me, and . . . has fastened a personal quarrel upon me. As a personal quarrel it is private property, . . . I respectfully demand that there may be no interference on the part of my friends."

Lane, however, did not fail to let his friends know what he was doing. "One night about 10 o'clock, in the spring of 1858," said Captain Samuel Walker, then deputy sheriff of Douglas county, to the writer, "a messenger came in hot haste to my house—I lived in the country, three or four miles from Lawrence—and told me that I was wanted in town at once. I mounted my horse and hurried to the village. On my arrival I learned that Lane wished to see me. I found him with a number of intimate friends in his room at the Johnson House. When I entered he was writing and did not notice me. The task which appeared to absorb him so completely turned out to be the drafting of his will. When he had finished the document he read it to the company. Then, turning to me, he said, 'I have sent Denver a letter that will compel a hostile meeting. Now I do not want you as sheriff to interfere and prevent it.' 'But Denver is a dead shot,' I answered, 'and we can't spare you yet.' 'As the challenged party,' Lane replied, 'I shall have the choice of weapons. Do you see that gun in the corner? It's a Sharpe's target rifle, and another cannot be found in the territory. I shall choose it.' I saw quickly enough that there would be no fight. In the morning I rode over to Lecompton and called on Denver. He told me he had received an insulting letter from Lane, but laughed at the idea of sending him a challenge."

This melodramatic fiasco did not conclude the Denver episode. A second chapter followed which was brief but sensational. Since his old and favorite resource, the code, had failed him in dealing with the case, Lane determined to see whether better results might not be secured through the agency of a secret society. He therefore instituted one and gave it the significant name of "Danites." An atmosphere of profound mystery invested the organization. People wondered what the unknown perils, which called it into existence, could be. When the time came for definite statements there was a large attendance and it included many of the most conservative and respected citizens of Lawrence. Upon Lane as founder of the order and chief depository of its dark mysteries devolved the task of exposition. He rose with an air of tragic solemnity and said that at no period in the history of the territory had the situation been more critical than at the present moment. In the governor's chair there sits an unscrupulous and desperate man, a professed duellist, his hands reeking with human blood, a tool of the administration and in full sympathy with our enemies. Let a committee be appointed, a trustworthy, patriotic committee, who will carry through anything they may undertake without flinching. Let the committee lie in ambush for this man and rid the territory of him forever !

Lane concluded amidst the profoundest silence, which a member of the order, who could no longer repress his indignation, broke by exclaiming, "If this is a nest of d——d assassins, you may count me out." There was a general desire to be counted out and the meeting came to an abrupt conclusion.

Three days before Governor Denver warned the people of the territory against "one J. H. Lane," the President of the United States characterized him, in a message to congress, as "a most turbulent and dangerous" military leader. Lane replied to this attack in a speech delivered at Lawrence, February 13, 1858. He realized that a successful personal defence would be difficult in the presence of men who heard his address before the society of "Danites" or who were at Leavenworth when he considered the case of John Calhoun and Batt Jones, and he passed lightly over this phase of the subject. Waiving personal considerations, he devoted himself to a general review of the territorial history and spoke with a candor and fairness, with a sobriety, a directness and comprehension which surprise us. In this sanest of his *Kansas* speeches Lane declared that the policy of the anti-slavery *party* had been pacific. "At the great delegate convention held at Big Springs in September, 1855," he said, "it was unanimously resolved, after full discussion and deliberation, not to organize in resistance" to the

territorial government. "We adopted the *let alone* policy, neither resorting to nor resisting it. This plan was embraced as the peacefully legal one in preference to organized resistance to the territorial laws, to save the effusion of blood and to avoid those laws instead of coming in conflict with them." The people of Kansas, "patriotic, patient and peace-loving," the victim of frauds which would have driven any other community "into bloodshed and civil war," were never in arms "except to resist invasion from other states" and that after protection had been refused. A scheme of state government was devised in the interest of peace. When the Topeka movement fell into some discredit another constitution "was tendered in a Christian and patriotic spirit for a speedy and just settlement" of the controversy. Speaking of the territorial history in the Senate of the United States four years later, he made a similar statement. "In 1855, 1856, 1857 and 1858," he remarked, ". . . Kansas acted exclusively on the defensive." Though Old John Brown and the young men who wrote for the Eastern press dissented; though in the temptations and exasperations of the struggle Lane's hare-brained schemes as well as his lurid stump oratory often ran counter to this theory, yet his statement is true in regard to the tactics which the anti-slavery party adopted and on the whole successfully carried out.¹

Unaccountable as it may seem, the Denver episode did not relegate Lane to private life. But what that crazy affair failed to do was very nearly effected by a common-place incident of the border, a claim dispute. Richardson, in his *Beyond the Mississippi*, relates that one day in June, 1858, as he sat in the office of the Lawrence *Herald of Freedom* writing, he heard a cry on the street—"Jim Lane has killed Gaius Jenkins." Hurrying to the scene of the affray Richardson found Jenkins dead and Lane disabled by a wound in the knee. The quarrel, which came at last to this deplorable issue, had been in progress two or three years. Jenkins accused Lane of "jumping" a claim that belonged to him. On this fatal day in June, accompanied by three armed men, he invaded the disputed premises and began to cut down an obnoxious fence. After warning him to desist, and after his own life had been threatened, Lane

¹ Kansas history is not very ancient, but if we may believe certain recent writers, "a curious myth," for which Governor Robinson is said to be mainly responsible, has already grown up concerning it. This myth is the "theory that there existed from the beginning two well-defined parties, the one wishing to carry its ends by war, the other by peace." Neither Governor Robinson, nor any body else, so far as the present writer is aware, holds this theory. Lane did not misrepresent the action of the Free State party. The speech and practice of a good many individuals may have been out of harmony with the resolutions at Big Springs; some of these individuals may have failed of consistency either in speech or practice—but all that is neither here nor there.

fired the deadly shot. Whatever the equities of the case may have been, technically the contention of Jenkins could not be sustained—such, at all events, was the conclusion which the Department of the Interior finally reached.

Lane won the land, but he paid a heavy price for it, far heavier than he meant to pay. The tragedy, so his friends said, “put a burden upon his soul which never lifted.” Months of profound depression succeeded. One who met him on the streets of Lawrence in these dark days described him as “care-worn, haggard, reduced almost to a skeleton, the picture of despair.” Politically his career seemed to be finished, so powerful was the current which the homicide set in motion against him. It is an interesting fact that Lane’s return to public life, after more than a year of seclusion, should have been in a certain authentic sense by way of the church. “I baptized him August 29th, 1859,” said the Rev. Mr. Dennis, “during a camp-meeting near Baldwin City. He manifested much feeling and answered all the questions readily.” An element of religion, assumed or genuine, had not been wanting in his career. His piety, it is true, sometimes took on a peculiar shape. For instance, on his overland journey through Missouri *en route* to Kansas he stopped one day at a farm-house for dinner. “It is my custom,” he remarked to his hostess, “to say grace before eating.” After staring at him for a moment incredulously the woman replied, “Go in, then, old fellow.” According to the traditions he subsequently visited Missouri disguised as the Rev. Mr. Foote, of Alabama, in order to familiarize himself with the topography of the state, thinking that possibly such information might some time be useful. He preached, it is said, on occasion, and awakened great enthusiasm by his denunciation of the Kansas abolitionists.

More than three years elapsed between Lane’s application for admission to the church and his baptism at Baldwin City. The application was made during a series of revival services in the Methodist church at Lawrence—to the surprise of everybody. Near the close of one of the meetings he rose and began: “Sixteen years ago an aged, pious and widowed mother lay dying. She called her eldest son to her bedside and said, ‘Henry, it is my desire that you should have religion, and that, if consistent with your feelings, you should find it within the Methodist church.’ What could that son do but make the pledge? To-night he appears before you to redeem it. Wicked as he may have been, he desires to be received on probation into the church of which she was a life-long and consistent member.” These words made a profound impression. “Great God!” exclaimed the leader, the Rev. Mr. Dennis, who

soon proceeded, however, from exclamations of surprise to a little good advice. "My dear brother Lane," he said, "we rejoice to hear your decision, but you will have a very narrow way to walk in. It will go out, 'Lane has joined the church.' Let men and devils know that you are earnest and honest." Whatever the devils may have thought, some men scoffed. As these periods of piety were fragmentary and often coincided with periods when "endorsements" and fresh certificates of good character would be useful, they regarded Lane's connection with the church as a move in the game of politics and nothing more. Unquestionably he had a loose and troubled possession of religion, but shall we deny to the inconstant phases of it all traces of sincerity and genuineness? Lane's own philosophy of his religious life may be as satisfactory as any. A certain speech, that he delivered at Leavenworth, fairly smoked with profanity. Some of the auditors were disgusted and took him to task. "Why," he replied in surprise, "I am a pious man. Just now, to be sure, I may not be quite up to the devotional point!" Lane's theological and ethical sentiments, it must be admitted, were unconventional. "God himself marches before us," he said, in an address on the issues of the day, before the Leavenworth Library Association, January 27, 1862, "and for my part I would just as soon follow him as any other leader!"

With the admission of Kansas to the Union in 1861 a new epoch opened for Lane. The territory interested him mainly as a convenient stepping-stone to the Senate, but the obstacles which must be overcome were very great. His blunders and follies would have ruined any ordinary man. In addition to all other burdens and disabilities he had no money. The wolf was often at his door. "I have been refused credit for a loaf of bread in Lawrence," he said on one occasion, "and my family have not even the necessities of life." When the senatorial contest opened, Lane succeeded in borrowing twenty dollars, proceeded to the capital and opened head-quarters in one of the hotels. Efforts were made to induce his landlord to turn him out of doors on the ground that he could never pay his bills, but the plot failed. If it should succeed he swore that he "would move into a dry-goods box and get ahead of the hounds." He did get ahead of them. After a campaign remarkable for its vicissitudes and uncertainties this "demon of the impossible" carried his point and reached the Senate of the United States.

"Now we shall see what a live man can do," said Lane when he left Lawrence for Washington. He set forth "to climb after his desires" with tireless energy and confidence. And these desires

soared to no ordinary pitch. The belief had long haunted him that some day the people of the country would call him to the highest office within their gift. Many were the conferences, which he held with intimate friends, on this subject. When it was once suggested that the Jenkins affair might prove troublesome he replied, "Oh that won't make any difference. General Jackson was a duellist and I don't believe that the killing of a man in self-defence will hurt me." The difficulties of organizing and conducting a national political campaign were mentioned. He thought there would be but little need of machinery. "If the young men of the territory will go into every Northern state and get up another Kansas excitement, nothing more will be necessary."

Lane reached Washington in the early days of the war. His first notable service lay outside the halls of Congress—the organization of a company of volunteers for the protection of the President. On the 18th of April, 1861, he received a request to report immediately with his men at the White House. About dusk the company followed him into the great East Room, where they bivouacked. In the middle of the night, Mr. Lincoln, arm in arm with Secretary Stanton, is said to have appeared at the door and gazed upon the spectacle with an expression of profound sadness.

Lane quickly became an important man in Washington. At one period, such were the frequency and urgency of his communications with the War Department, a carriage stood before his lodgings day and night, ready for instant use. Mr. Lincoln liked him and accepted without qualification his version of border affairs. "You can hardly conceive," General Hunter, who commanded the military department of Kansas wrote early in 1862, "to what an extent the authorities at Washington have carried their faith in the representations of Mr. Lane." The most violent domestic feuds were raging in the new state, a legacy from the territorial days, as they really began with the accession of Lane to the anti-slavery party. It soon became evident that, in the critical condition of affairs, he was not a safe leader, and that somebody must undertake to keep him within bounds, or, if that could not be done, to minimize the effect of his eccentricities and lunacies. The brunt of this disagreeable business fell upon Dr. Robinson. Sooner or later an open rupture was inevitable, and Kansas has reason to be thankful that he did not shrink from it. When Lane got the ear of the Washington authorities he won a great temporary advantage. Apparently they accepted his customary description of Robinson, who had become governor of the state—a description which lacked neither point nor emphasis—"slanderer, traitor and coward." Hence

they authorized him to raise regiments, to appoint their officers, and to usurp other functions that belonged exclusively to the governor. But partisans of Lane insisted that official red tape must not be allowed to abridge his career. They attributed to him phenomenal military genius. "He has every quality of mind and character," said *The Leavenworth Conservative*, "which belonged to the historical commanders. . . . Put Jim Lane at the head of our armies, and instead of months of idleness we shall have victories every day and a restored union in six months." Mr. Lincoln may have been less enthusiastic in his admiration, but on the 20th day of June, 1861, he wrote the Secretary of War that the services of such a man as Lane were needed in Kansas. "We had better appoint him a brigadier-general of volunteers to-day," he continued, "and take such measures as will get him into service quickest." It turned out—the matter caused a great deal of discussion in the Senate and elsewhere—that Lane never technically accepted the appointment. Yet the fact that he held no military commission did not prevent his taking the field and operating on the western border of Missouri "with a smart little army of about 1500." It was a campaign of fire and sword. This "smart little army" made a desert out of the country through which it passed, seizing property of every description, burning towns and hanging disloyalists. Lane concluded one of his dispatches with the detached, incidental observation, "I have offered a reward of \$1000 for the head of Matthews," an observation quite as suggestive and significant as the more formal part of the report. His name became a terror on the border. In 1862 a band of seventy-five negroes marched unmolested from southern Kansas to the Arkansas line and liberated some of their friends. A scout rode in advance of the main body, and if he discovered any suspicious-looking men about, it was only necessary for him to dash up to them shouting "Jim Lane, Jim Lane is coming!"—they fled in a panic.

The effect of this savage warfare upon Lane's "smart little army" was deplorable. After a few weeks of service the author of the "Miles O'Reilly" papers, then assistant adjutant-general at Fort Leavenworth, reported them as utterly demoralized—"a mere ragged, half-armed, mutinous rabble, taking votes as to whether any troublesome order should be obeyed or defied." On the 8th of October Lane undertook the defense of his marauders in a speech at Leavenworth. "Two months ago," he said, "the Kansas brigade was organized. I was put at the head of it with the respect, the confidence, aye, the love of every man in that command. . . . What is the charge which the creatures at the Fort make against

the Kansas brigade? We are Jay-hawkers. . . . When you march through a state you must destroy the property of the men in arms against it—destroy, devastate, desolate. . . . I ask you to stand between me and the vile traitors and slanderers in the rear. . . . Why, my soldiers would follow me right into the middle of hell !”

Lane was anxious for further military service and at once set about the organization of “an active winter’s campaign” in western Missouri and Arkansas, of which he should be the leader. Nobody outside of Washington was consulted. General Hunter complained that “the Kansas senator would seem to have effectually ‘jay-hawked’” all knowledge or remembrance of him out of the minds of the authorities. The doughty old veteran, however, concluded to stand upon his rights and to lead in person any “Great Southern Expedition” that might be undertaken. His decision killed the scheme and the originator of it returned to Washington in an unhappy state of mind.

General Hunter vetoed one military enterprise upon which the Kansas senator had set his heart and General Schofield vetoed another. In August, 1863, Quantrill and his bushrangers, who destroyed Lawrence and butchered one hundred and eighty of the inhabitants, barely missed including Lane among the victims. As they escaped with little loss, he elaborated a plan of retaliation, which he believed would meet the necessities of the case. It was proposed that the entire male population of Kansas should assemble at Paola on the eighth day of October, equipped for a campaign of fifteen days ; that this armed horde should be turned loose upon western Missouri to exact such satisfaction as might seem good in their sight. The commander of the department did not approve of the contemplated expedition, and gave the projectors of it to understand that he would interpose if it were attempted. A dispatch, which Lane sent Mr. Lincoln, August 26, 1863, does not leave any doubt whatever in regard to his opinion of this intermeddling commander—“the imbecility and incapacity of Schofield is most deplorable.”¹ It turned out that General Schofield was able to deal successfully with the Paola emergency. When the eighth day of October dawned, a small fraction only of the citizens of Kansas assembled in that town, and they contented themselves with speeches and resolutions.

The next year General Sterling Price attempted a counter-invasion from Missouri. Lane joined the staff of the Federal com-

¹ “I have not the ‘capacity’ to see the wisdom or justice of permitting an irresponsible mob to enter Missouri for the purpose of retaliation.” Schofield, *Forty-six Years in the Army*, p. 79.

mander and served seventeen days. It was his last appearance in the field, and his energy, his enthusiasm and knowledge of the country appear to have contributed materially to the success of the operations by which "an insolent and hopeful foe . . . was met, checked, beaten back and finally put to rout." But, when every claim which can be fairly made in Lane's behalf has been allowed, there is no escape from the conclusion that Mr. Lincoln made a serious mistake in commissioning him as brigadier-general of volunteers and dispatching him to Kansas. General Halleck thought that the appointment was putting "a premium on robbery and rascality." His view of the case came nearer the truth than Mr. Lincoln's.¹

If Lane won few laurels in the field, he did gain distinction as Commissioner of Recruiting. August 4, 1862, he opened an office at Leavenworth to raise and equip negro soldiers. "I had the honor," he said in the Senate, January 4, 1864, and he repeated the statement on other occasions, "I had the honor of organizing the first regiment of colored soldiers in this war." He may not have been entirely justified in making this unqualified claim, since General Hunter, who balked his "Great Southern Expedition" so effectually, began to arm negroes in South Carolina during the month of May, 1862. Hunter's experiment did not have much immediate success. The blacks, alarmed by various sensational rumors, hesitated to enlist. A draft, which was ordered, did not help matters and the regiment finally disbanded, with the exception of a single company. That became the nucleus of a new organization, which General Saxton reported, November 12, 1862, to be "filling up rapidly—550 are already enrolled." A portion of this regiment was mustered into service November 7. Lane's colored troops experienced no vicissitudes of disbandment and reorganization. He raised them "by one swoop—just by sending out patrols the men were brought right in." The hostility of the community gave him more trouble than anything else. "On account of the prejudice of the public against the first colored regiment," he said, "I was compelled to keep it out of sight and drill it in a retired place." This regiment was not mustered into service until January 12, 1863, though, meanwhile, it "fought, drilled and labored," losing "a great many men by battle and disease."

Lane was a pro-slavery Democrat when he came to Kansas in 1855. Two years in the territory effected a great change in his

¹ "It was very difficult for me to comprehend the political necessity which compelled Mr. Lincoln to give his official countenance to such men as Lane and Blunt in Kansas." Schofield, *Forty-six Years in the Army*, p. 111.

sentiments. "I will never cease my efforts," he said in a speech at Topeka in 1857, "until from the Yellowstone in the North to the Gulf in the South, one line of free states shall be reared, an impenetrable barrier against which the cursed waves of slavery shall dash themselves in vain. Until that time comes I am a crusader for Freedom." Soon after his arrival in Washington he began to speak of himself as "a radical and abolitionist." In 1861 he declared that if slavery shall perish thereby, "we will thank God that He has brought upon us this war." At a later period, when the subject was before Congress, he contended that colored troops ought to have all the rights and privileges of their white comrades. Let there be no discrimination, he urged, "between the soldiers . . . who mingle their blood in the same great cause."

Yet Lane advocated colonization. His most elaborate speech in Congress was devoted to a statement and defense of this policy. It seemed to him in 1861 that South America ought to be given up to the negro. "Sir, I want to see," he said in the Senate, July 18, "so soon as it can be done constitutionally these two races separated, an ocean rolling between them; that—South America—the elysium of the colored man; this the elysium of the white."

In 1864 Lane revived the scheme with some modifications. He believed that the black man could not hold his own against "the grasping cupidity" of the whites in a northern climate. We ought, therefore, he argued, to place him in a position where he can take care of himself and that will be possible only in the South. What section of it shall be dedicated to the experiment? "Some of us would be glad," he said, "to set aside South Carolina . . . as the future home of the colored man. I have frequently gone so far myself as to say that I hoped the time would come when the footprint of the white man should not be found on the soil of South Carolina." But serious objections to that locality would remain even if we should "slay all the male traitors" in it. There is, however, an available section, free from any of the difficulties which would embarrass the enterprise in South Carolina—the territory of the Rio Grande. In situation, in fertility and extent it is all that could be desired. When this territory shall be thrown open to their exclusive use, colored men will be attracted to it from Canada to the Gulf. Emigrants, crowding all the avenues of approach will hasten thither "in every kind of a vehicle from a wheel barrow to a mail-coach. . . . Thus that question which has disturbed the peace of the nation during my entire life will be fully settled."

If Mr. Lincoln conferred upon Lane powers such as no other senator either possessed or desired, the latter was able to make sub-

stantial returns for the unprecedented favors which he had received. These returns were mainly in the line of campaign oratory. As one might have anticipated, the Senate did not prove to be a favorable arena for Lane's peculiar gifts of speech. He found the atmosphere and traditions of the place a trifle oppressive. The remarkable prophecy of *The Leavenworth Conservative*—we have already quoted this mis-named periodical on Lane's military genius—came short of fulfilment. "When the Sermon on the Mount, preached by the Savior of mankind," the editor of this newspaper wrote, "ceases to be sublime, then will Lane . . . cease to be as eloquent as finite beings can be!" In the Senate his eloquence did practically cease. On one or two occasions he broke through the restraints of the place and spoke in his natural vein. "Old Jim thinks he's at Baldwin City," was the comment of a Kansan in the gallery. His latest oratorical triumphs were won, not in the Senate, but in the political campaign which preceded Mr. Lincoln's renomination. As Mr. Lincoln's first term drew to a close it became evident that a formidable opposition must be reckoned with in the Republican party. Men like Henry Winter Davis, Thaddeus Stevens and Benjamin F. Wade were out of sympathy with his policy and methods. Editors of influential newspapers, notably Mr. Greeley of *The New York Tribune*, made no secret of their disaffection. So early as the 10th of March, 1864, Lane announced that Mr. Lincoln was "the consistent, stern and proper leader" of the loyal party. He was selected, by the President himself it is said, to open the campaign in the city of New York and spoke on the thirtieth of March in Cooper Institute before the Union Lincoln Club. He began by referring to his own change of political views. "I was born and reared a Democrat," he remarked, "and Oh! what a thing to say before God—taught to believe that slavery was a divine institution." He told the story of his conversion, the story to which the Missourians listened with interest at Nebraska City in 1856. Then he passed to consider the gravity of the present crisis, urging that "the battle to be fought with ballots in November is as important as any battle to be fought with bullets during the war." He dwelt upon "the capacity for governing" which Mr. Lincoln "had amply demonstrated," and upon the fact that the selection of any other candidate would give a great shock to public confidence. The meeting concluded with three cheers for the orator and three times three for the President.

On another and more notable occasion Lane undertook a similar commission at the request of Mr. Lincoln. The Grand Council of the Union League met in Baltimore, June 6, 1864, the day before

the National Republican Convention assembled. It was understood that a demonstration would be made in the League against the President, but the rancor and violence of it surpassed all expectation. Not a word was said in reply until the storm had spent its fury. Then Lane rose and addressed himself to the task of turning "the tide of passion and excitement in the opposite direction . . . a task worthy of the highest, greatest effort of human oratory. I am no orator at all, but to precisely that task have I now set myself with absolute certainty of success. It is only needful that the true should be set forth plainly now that the false has done its worst." After a rapid survey in which the patience, the magnanimity, the statesmanship of the President were vividly and dramatically portrayed, there followed a quick glance at the great convention about to assemble. "If we nominate any other than Abraham Lincoln," said the orator, "we nominate ruin." His triumph was complete. When he finished the tide of passion and excitement had been turned in the opposite direction !

The question, who shall be the candidate for Vice-President, was also anxiously debated in Republican circles. Mr. Lincoln remained silent. It was generally thought that he favored the selection of a southern Unionist, but nobody appeared to have any definite information upon this point. Lane claimed to have secured the nomination of Andrew Johnson. "I originally selected him," he said, "as the candidate of the Republican party for the second office within the gift of that party. . . . I urged him on the convention at Baltimore." At least three months before the meeting of the convention Lane assured friends in Kansas that he would be nominated.

After the death of Mr. Lincoln, President Johnson and Congress soon parted company over the question of reconstruction. The differences came to an open rupture with the veto of the Civil Rights bill, an extreme, ill-advised measure designed to protect the negroes of the South. Senator Wade of Ohio assailed the President in the most violent language—accused him of attempting to play the part of dictator, despot and traitor ; of plotting to bring back the rebels into congress "for the utter destruction of the government." In this contest Lane broke away from the radicals with whom he had fraternized and undertook the defense of the President. He denounced Wade's speech as "one of the most vindictive assaults ever made upon a public official, . . . an assault upon my personal friend . . . whom I learned to respect and admire for his pluck, his ability and integrity, and to love for his manly virtues." Wade intimated that Lane was wearing the collar of the President of the

United States, a suggestion which he indignantly repelled. "I wear a collar! The pro-slavery party of the United States backed by a Democratic administration, sustained and supported by the army, could not fasten a collar upon the handful of Kansas squatters of whom I had the honor to be the leader. . . . I wear a collar! Indicted for treason by a pro-slavery grand jury, hunted from state to state by a writ founded upon that indictment and \$100,000 offered for my head! Jim Lane wear a collar! Wherever he is known that charge will be denounced as false by both friends and enemies."

A fatal despondency succeeded this belligerent mood. Lane had been involved in some doubtful transactions connected with the management of Indian affairs. Angered by his desertion, the Republican senators proposed to investigate them. If charges were formulated and pressed, expulsion from the Senate might follow, and in that event a re-election would be impossible. The future seemed an outlook into despair. "I would give all I possess," he said, "if the mistake were undone." But had Lane made a mistake in his defense of President Johnson? Certainly not unless we measure his conduct by the standards of a blind partisanship. The scheme of reconstruction which he advocated was preferable to the rough-shod programme of the radicals. It is a curious illustration of the perversities of fate that some tardy, fitful blossoming of statesmanship should have proved an occasion of ruin to a man whose follies and sins had been so ample. But such was the case, and Lane, unable to find a better solution, cut the knot of his perplexities by suicide.

Little remains to be said in the way of epilogue to this wild biography. The personal magnetism of Lane, his enormous energy, his remarkable gifts of stump-oratory, and his impulsive patriotism, were accompanied by qualities of rashness, demagogism and moral obliquity, which made him, in spite of all that belongs to his credit, and the sum of it is not inconsiderable, a dangerous man.

LEVERETT W. SPRING.